

Assembly Bill No. 2600

Passed the Assembly August 31, 2006

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Passed the Senate August 30, 2006

Secretary of the Senate

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day
of _____, 2006, at _____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to amend Sections 5205.5, 21655.9, and 40000.13 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2600, Lieu. Vehicles: HOV lanes.

(1) Existing law provides for the Department of Transportation to designate certain lanes for the exclusive use of high-occupancy vehicles (HOVs), which lanes may also be used by certain low-emission and hybrid vehicles not carrying the requisite number of passengers otherwise required for use of an HOV lane if the vehicles display a valid identifier issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles until January 1, 2008. Existing law requires the department to make available for issuance, no more than 75,000 distinctive decals, labels, and other identifiers for certain hybrid or alternative fuel vehicles meeting specified mileage and emission standards. Existing law authorizes, but does not require, the Bay Area Toll Authority to grant toll-free or reduced-rate passage on the state-owned Bay Area toll bridges to any vehicle. Existing law requires that if such authority is exercised the same toll-free or reduced-rate passage be extended to certain low-emission vehicles and hybrid vehicles displaying the identifier issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles, until January 1, 2008, subject to various conditions.

This bill would extend these provisions until January 1, 2011, or until the Director of Transportation determines that federal law does not authorize the state to allow these low-emission and hybrid vehicles to so operate in HOV lanes, whichever occurs first.

This bill would increase the number of described distinctive decals, labels, and other identifiers that are required to be issued by the department to no more than 85,000, rather than no more than 75,000.

(2) Existing law prohibits, until January 1, 2008, a person from operating or owning a vehicle that displays a decal, label, or other identifier if that identifier was not issued to that vehicle.

Existing law provides that a violation of this prohibition is a misdemeanor.

This bill would extend this prohibition to January 1, 2011 or until the Director of Transportation makes a determination regarding federal law, as specified. Because a violation of this prohibition is a crime, this bill would create a state-mandated local program.

(3) This bill would incorporate changes made to Sections 5205.5 and 21655.9 of the Vehicle Code proposed by AB 1407 to become operative only if AB 1407 and this bill are both chaptered and become effective on or before January 1, 2007, and this bill is chaptered last.

(4) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 5205.5 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

5205.5. (a) For the purposes of implementing Section 21655.9, the department shall make available for issuance, for a fee determined by the department to be sufficient to reimburse the department for the actual costs incurred pursuant to this section, distinctive decals, labels, and other identifiers that clearly distinguish the following vehicles from other vehicles:

(1) A vehicle that meets California's super ultra-low emission vehicle (SULEV) standard for exhaust emissions and the federal inherently low-emission vehicle (ILEV) evaporative emission standard, as defined in Part 88 (commencing with Section 88.101-94) of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) A vehicle that was produced during the 2004 model-year or earlier and meets California ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) standard for exhaust emissions and the federal ILEV standard.

(3) A hybrid vehicle or an alternative fuel vehicle that meets California's advanced technology partial zero-emission vehicle

(AT PZEV) standard for criteria pollutant emissions and has a 45 miles per gallon or greater fuel economy highway rating.

(4) A hybrid vehicle that was produced during the 2004 model-year or earlier and has a 45 miles per gallon or greater fuel economy highway rating, and meets California's ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV), super ultra-low emission vehicle (SULEV), or partial zero-emission vehicle (PZEV) standards.

(b) Neither an owner of a hybrid vehicle that meets the AT PZEV standard, with the exception of a vehicle that meets the federal ILEV standard, nor an owner of a hybrid vehicle described in paragraph (4) of subdivision (a), is entitled to a decal, label, or other identifier pursuant to this section unless, and until, the federal government acts to approve the use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes by vehicles of the types identified in paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (a), regardless of the number of occupants.

(c) The department shall include a summary of the provisions of this section on each motor vehicle registration renewal notice, or on a separate insert, if space is available and the summary can be included without incurring additional printing or postage costs.

(d) The Department of Transportation shall remove individual high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, or portions of those lanes, during periods of peak congestion from the access provisions provided in subdivision (a), following a finding by the Department of Transportation as follows:

(1) The lane, or portion thereof, exceeds a level of service C, as discussed in subdivision (b) of Section 65089 of the Government Code.

(2) The operation or projected operation of the vehicles described in subdivision (a) in these lanes, or portions thereof, will significantly increase congestion.

The finding also shall demonstrate the infeasibility of alleviating the congestion by other means, including, but not limited to, reducing the use of the lane by noneligible vehicles, or further increasing vehicle occupancy.

(e) The State Air Resources Board shall publish and maintain a listing of all vehicles eligible for participation in the programs described in this section. The board shall provide that listing to the department.

(f) For purposes of subdivision (a), the Department of the California Highway Patrol and the department, in consultation with the Department of Transportation, shall design and specify the placement of the decal, label, or other identifier on the vehicle. Each decal, label, or other identifier issued for a vehicle shall display a unique number, which number shall be printed on, or affixed to, the vehicle registration.

(g) (1) For purposes of subdivision (a), the department shall issue no more than 85,000 distinctive decals, labels, or other identifiers that clearly distinguish the vehicles specified in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subdivision (a).

(2) The department shall notify the Department of Transportation immediately after the date on which the department has issued 50,000 decals, labels, and other identifiers under this section for the vehicles described in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subdivision (a).

(3) The Department of Transportation shall determine whether significant high-occupancy vehicle lane breakdown has occurred throughout the state, in accordance with the following timeline:

(A) For lanes that are nearing capacity, the Department of Transportation shall make the determination not later than 90 days after the date provided by the department under paragraph (2).

(B) For lanes that are not nearing capacity, the Department of Transportation shall make the determination not later than 180 days after the date provided by the department under paragraph (2).

(4) In making the determination that significant high-occupancy vehicle lane breakdown has occurred, the Department of Transportation shall consider the following factors in the HOV lane:

(A) Reduction in level of service.

(B) Sustained stop-and-go conditions.

(C) Slower than average speed than the adjacent mixed-flow lanes.

(D) Consistent increase in travel time.

(5) After making the determinations pursuant to subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (3), if the Department of Transportation determines that significant high-occupancy vehicle lane breakdown has occurred throughout the state, the Department of

Transportation shall immediately notify the department of that determination, and the department, on the date of receiving that notification, shall discontinue issuing the decals, labels, or other identifiers for the vehicles described in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subdivision (a).

(h) If the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, serving as the Bay Area Toll Authority, grants toll-free and reduced-rate passage on toll bridges under its jurisdiction to any vehicle pursuant to Section 30102.5 of the Streets and Highways Code, it shall also grant the same toll-free and reduced-rate passage to a vehicle displaying an identifier issued by the department pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (a) and to a vehicle displaying a valid identifier issued by the department pursuant to paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (a) if either of the following apply:

(1) The vehicle is registered to an address outside of the region identified in Section 66502 of the Government Code.

(2) If the vehicle is registered to an address inside the region, the owner of the vehicle complies with subdivision (i) unless subdivision (j) is applicable.

(i) An owner of a vehicle specified in paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (a) whose vehicle is registered to an address in the region identified in Section 66502 of the Government Code and who seeks a vehicle identifier under subdivision (a) shall obtain an account to operate within the automatic vehicle identification system described in Section 27565 of the Streets and Highways Code and shall submit to the department a form, approved by the department and issued by the Bay Area Toll Authority, that contains the vehicle owner's name, the license plate number and vehicle identification number of the vehicle, the vehicle make and year model, and the automatic vehicle identification system account number, as a condition to obtaining a vehicle identifier pursuant to subdivision (a) that allows for the use of that vehicle in high-occupancy vehicle lanes regardless of the number of occupants.

(j) If the automatic vehicle identification system readers on all high-occupancy vehicle lanes on all of the toll bridges identified in subdivision (a) of Section 30910 of the Streets and Highways Code are not fully operational and fully funded with bridge tolls controlled by the Bay Area Toll Authority within 90 days of the

federal government approval described in subdivision (b), then subdivision (i) shall not be applicable and both of the following shall apply:

(1) The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, acting as the Bay Area Toll Authority, shall grant toll-free and reduced-rate passage to all vehicles displaying an identifier issued by the department pursuant to subdivision (a).

(2) The department shall not require documentation that the owner of a vehicle registered to an address in the region identified in Section 66502 of the Government Code has obtained an automatic vehicle identification system account as a condition to the issuance of an identifier under subdivision (a).

(k) If the Director of Transportation determines that federal law does not authorize the state to allow vehicles that are identified by distinctive decals, labels, or other identifiers on vehicles described in subdivision (a) to use highway lanes or highway access ramps for high-occupancy vehicles regardless of vehicle occupancy, the Director of Transportation shall submit a notice of that determination to the Secretary of State.

(l) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2011, or only until the date that the Secretary of State receives the notice described in subdivision (k), whichever occurs first, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 2. Section 5205.5 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

5205.5. (a) For the purposes of implementing Section 21655.9, the department shall make available for issuance, for a fee determined by the department to be sufficient to reimburse the department for the actual costs incurred pursuant to this section, distinctive decals, labels, and other identifiers that clearly distinguish the following vehicles from other vehicles:

(1) A vehicle that meets California's super ultra-low emission vehicle (SULEV) standard for exhaust emissions and the federal inherently low-emission vehicle (ILEV) evaporative emission standard, as defined in Part 88 (commencing with Section 88.101-94) of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) A vehicle that was produced during the 2004 model-year or earlier and meets California ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) standard for exhaust emissions and the federal ILEV standard.

(3) A hybrid vehicle or an alternative fuel vehicle that meets California's advanced technology partial zero-emission vehicle (AT PZEV) standard for criteria pollutant emissions and has a 45 miles per gallon or greater fuel economy highway rating.

(4) A hybrid vehicle that was produced during the 2004 model-year or earlier and has a 45 miles per gallon or greater fuel economy highway rating, and meets California's ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV), super ultra-low emission vehicle (SULEV), or partial zero-emission vehicle (PZEV) standards.

(b) Neither an owner of a hybrid vehicle that meets the AT PZEV standard, with the exception of a vehicle that meets the federal ILEV standard, nor an owner of a hybrid vehicle described in paragraph (4) of subdivision (a), is entitled to a decal, label, or other identifier pursuant to this section unless, and until, the federal government acts to approve the use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes by vehicles of the types identified in paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (a), regardless of the number of occupants.

(c) The department shall include a summary of the provisions of this section on each motor vehicle registration renewal notice, or on a separate insert, if space is available and the summary can be included without incurring additional printing or postage costs.

(d) The Department of Transportation shall remove individual high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, or portions of those lanes, during periods of peak congestion from the access provisions provided in subdivision (a), following a finding by the Department of Transportation as follows:

(1) The lane, or portion thereof, exceeds a level of service C, as discussed in subdivision (b) of Section 65089 of the Government Code.

(2) The operation or projected operation of the vehicles described in subdivision (a) in these lanes, or portions thereof, will significantly increase congestion.

The finding also shall demonstrate the infeasibility of alleviating the congestion by other means, including, but not limited to, reducing the use of the lane by noneligible vehicles, or further increasing vehicle occupancy.

(e) The State Air Resources Board shall publish and maintain a listing of all vehicles eligible for participation in the programs

described in this section. The board shall provide that listing to the department.

(f) For purposes of subdivision (a), the Department of the California Highway Patrol and the department, in consultation with the Department of Transportation, shall design and specify the placement of the decal, label, or other identifier on the vehicle. Each decal, label, or other identifier issued for a vehicle shall display a unique number, which number shall be printed on, or affixed to, the vehicle registration.

(g) (1) For purposes of subdivision (a), the department shall issue no more than 85,000 distinctive decals, labels, or other identifiers that clearly distinguish the vehicles specified in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subdivision (a).

(2) The department shall notify the Department of Transportation immediately after the date on which the department has issued 50,000 decals, labels, and other identifiers under this section for the vehicles described in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subdivision (a).

(3) The Department of Transportation shall determine whether significant high-occupancy vehicle lane breakdown has occurred throughout the state, in accordance with the following timeline:

(A) For lanes that are nearing capacity, the Department of Transportation shall make the determination not later than 90 days after the date provided by the department under paragraph (2).

(B) For lanes that are not nearing capacity, the Department of Transportation shall make the determination not later than 180 days after the date provided by the department under paragraph (2).

(4) In making the determination that significant high-occupancy vehicle lane breakdown has occurred, the Department of Transportation shall consider the following factors in the HOV lane:

(A) Reduction in level of service.

(B) Sustained stop-and-go conditions.

(C) Slower than average speed than the adjacent mixed-flow lanes.

(D) Consistent increase in travel time.

(5) After making the determinations pursuant to subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (3), if the Department of Transportation

determines that significant high-occupancy vehicle lane breakdown has occurred throughout the state, the Department of Transportation shall immediately notify the department of that determination, and the department, on the date of receiving that notification, shall discontinue issuing the decals, labels, or other identifiers for the vehicles described in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subdivision (a).

(h) If the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, serving as the Bay Area Toll Authority, grants toll-free and reduced-rate passage on toll bridges under its jurisdiction to any vehicle pursuant to Section 30102.5 of the Streets and Highways Code, it shall also grant the same toll-free and reduced-rate passage to a vehicle displaying an identifier issued by the department pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (a) and to a vehicle displaying a valid identifier issued by the department pursuant to paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (a) if the vehicle is registered to an address outside of the region identified in Section 66502 of the Government Code.

(i) An owner of a vehicle specified in paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (a) whose vehicle is registered to an address in the region identified in Section 66502 of the Government Code and who seeks a vehicle identifier under subdivision (a) in order to have access to a high-occupancy vehicle lane within the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Toll Authority shall do both of the following:

(1) Obtain and maintain an active account to operate within the automatic vehicle identification system described in Section 27565 of the Streets and Highways Code and shall submit to the department a form, approved by the department and issued by the Bay Area Toll Authority, that contains the vehicle owner's name, the license plate number and vehicle identification number of the vehicle, the vehicle make and year model, and the automatic vehicle identification system account number, as a condition to obtaining a vehicle identifier pursuant to subdivision (a) that allows for the use of that vehicle in high-occupancy vehicle lanes regardless of the number of occupants.

(2) Be eligible for toll-free or reduced-rate passage on toll bridges within the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Toll Authority only if, at time of passage, the vehicle meets the passenger

occupancy rate requirement established for that toll-free or reduced-rate passage.

(j) If the Director of Transportation determines that federal law does not authorize the state to allow vehicles that are identified by distinctive decals, labels, or other identifiers on vehicles described in subdivision (a) to use highway lanes or highway access ramps for high-occupancy vehicles regardless of vehicle occupancy, the Director of Transportation shall submit a notice of that determination to the Secretary of State.

(k) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2011, or only until the date the Secretary of State receives the notice described in subdivision (j), whichever occurs first, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 3. Section 21655.9 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

21655.9. (a) Whenever the Department of Transportation authorizes or permits exclusive or preferential use of highway lanes or highway access ramps for high-occupancy vehicles pursuant to Section 21655.5, the use of those lanes or ramps shall also be extended to vehicles that are issued distinctive decals, labels, or other identifiers pursuant to Section 5205.5 regardless of vehicle occupancy or ownership.

(b) A person shall not drive a vehicle described in subdivision (a) of Section 5205.5 with a single occupant upon a high-occupancy vehicle lane pursuant to this section unless the decal, label, or other identifier issued pursuant to Section 5205.5 is properly displayed on the vehicle, and the vehicle registration described in Section 5205.5 is with the vehicle.

(c) A person shall not operate or own a vehicle displaying a decal, label, or other identifier, as described in Section 5205.5, if that decal, label, or identifier was not issued for that vehicle pursuant to Section 5205.5. A violation of this subdivision is a misdemeanor.

(d) If the provisions in Section 5205.5 authorizing the department to issue decals, labels, or other identifiers to hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles are repealed, vehicles displaying those decals, labels, or other identifiers shall not access high-occupancy vehicle lanes without meeting the occupancy requirements otherwise applicable to those lanes.

(e) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2011, or only until the date that the Secretary of State receives the notice described in subdivision (k) of Section 5205.5, whichever occurs first, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 4. Section 21655.9 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

21655.9. (a) (1) Whenever the Department of Transportation or a local authority authorizes or permits exclusive or preferential use of highway lanes or highway access ramps for high-occupancy vehicles pursuant to Section 21655.5, the use of those lanes or ramps shall also be extended to vehicles that are issued distinctive decals, labels, or other identifiers pursuant to Section 5205.5 regardless of vehicle occupancy or ownership.

(2) A local authority during periods of peak congestion shall suspend for a lane the access privileges extended pursuant to paragraph (1) for those vehicles issued distinctive decals, labels, or other identifiers pursuant to Section 5205.5, if a periodic review of lane performance by that local authority discloses both of the following factors regarding the lane:

(A) The lane, or a portion thereof, exceeds a level of service C, as described in subdivision (b) of Section 65089 of the Government Code.

(B) The operation or projected operation of vehicles in the lane, or a portion thereof, will significantly increase congestion.

(b) A person shall not drive a vehicle described in subdivision (a) of Section 5205.5 with a single occupant upon a high-occupancy vehicle lane pursuant to this section unless the decal, label, or other identifier issued pursuant to Section 5205.5 is properly displayed on the vehicle, and the vehicle registration described in Section 5205.5 is with the vehicle.

(c) A person shall not operate or own a vehicle displaying a decal, label, or other identifier, as described in Section 5205.5, if that decal, label, or identifier was not issued for that vehicle pursuant to Section 5205.5. A violation of this subdivision is a misdemeanor.

(d) If the provisions in Section 5205.5 authorizing the department to issue decals, labels, or other identifiers to hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles are repealed, vehicles displaying those decals, labels, or other identifiers shall not access

high-occupancy vehicle lanes without meeting the occupancy requirements otherwise applicable to those lanes.

(e) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2011, or only until the date that the Secretary of State receives the notice described in subdivision (l) of Section 5205.5, whichever occurs first, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2008, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 5. Section 40000.13 of the Vehicle Code, as amended by Section 4 of Chapter 330 of the Statutes of 1999, is amended to read:

40000.13. A violation of any of the following provisions is a misdemeanor, and not an infraction:

- (a) Section 16560, relating to interstate highway carriers.
- (b) Sections 20002 and 20003, relating to duties at accidents.
- (c) Section 21200.5, relating to riding a bicycle while under the influence of an alcoholic beverage or any drug.
- (d) Section 21651, subdivision (b), relating to wrong-way driving on divided highways.
- (e) Section 21655.9, subdivision (c), relating to illegal use of decals, labels, or other identifiers.
- (f) Section 22520.5, a second or subsequent conviction of an offense relating to vending on or near freeways.
- (g) Section 22520.6, a second or subsequent conviction of an offense relating to roadside rest areas and vista points.
- (h) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2011, or only until the date that the Secretary of State receives the notice from the Director of Transportation as described in Section 5205.5, whichever occurs first, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 6. Section 40000.13 of the Vehicle Code, as added by Section 5 of Chapter 330 of the Statutes of 1999, is amended to read:

40000.13. A violation of any of the following provisions is a misdemeanor, and not an infraction:

- (a) Section 16560, relating to interstate highway carriers.
- (b) Sections 20002 and 20003, relating to duties at accidents.
- (c) Section 21200.5, relating to riding a bicycle while under the influence of an alcoholic beverage or any drug.

(d) Section 21651, subdivision (b), relating to wrong-way driving on divided highways.

(e) Section 22520.5, a second or subsequent conviction of an offense relating to vending on or near freeways.

(f) Section 22520.6, a second or subsequent conviction of an offense relating to roadside rest areas and vista points.

(g) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2011, or on the date that the Secretary of State receives the notice from the Director of Transportation as described in Section 5205.5, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 7. Section 2 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 5205.5 of the Vehicle Code proposed by both this bill and AB 1407. It shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2007, (2) each bill amends Section 5205.5 of the Vehicle Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after AB 1407, in which case Section 1 of this bill shall not become operative.

SEC. 8. Section 4 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 21655.9 of the Vehicle Code proposed by both this bill and AB 1407. It shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2007, (2) each bill amends Section 21655.9 of the Vehicle Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after AB 1407, in which case Section 3 of this bill shall not become operative.

SEC. 9. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

Approved _____, 2006

Governor